

Occupy CU General Assembly Minutes

Friday, February 24, 2012

IMC, Urbana, IL

NEXT MEETING: Friday, March 2, 2012, Champaign Public Library, Room B, 6 – 9 pm

In attendance: Rachel, Michelle, Michael, Jacob, Chris, Pam, Ya'aqov, Tony, Jesse, Sandra, Leighton, Ian, William, Aaron, Tony, Damian, Stuart, Rafter, Sarah, Sam, Theresa

LOGISTICS/AGENDA PROPOSAL

Theresa provided an agenda to which a few items were added and then the agenda was approved. Pam kindly agreed to facilitate and Jesse kept stack. Rachel and Sarah explained the hand gestures that might be used to communicate throughout the meeting. Theresa took notes.

WELCOME WORKSHOP: A few people shared why they are part of the movement.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ~ Stuart repeated his announcement for what is sure to be a provocative event based on Mark Braverman's recent talks in the area. AWARE and McKinley Church will be hosting the film, "Steadfast Hope: The Palestinian Quest for Just Peace" and discussion on Sunday, 2/26/12, from 2 to 5, at McKinley Presbyterian Church, 2nd floor East room. The film is by the Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- ~ Weekly Street Corner Protest, Saturday, Florida and Philo, Saturday, 2/25, 2 – 4.
- ~ Pam announced that the radio show, "The Labor Hour" would be featuring a panel discussion of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and their relationship to the Occupy Movement. This weekly program can be found at 90.1 FM from 11 am to noon. Additionally, there will be a television show on Channel 6 on Sunday, 2/26, from 4 to 5 about the same topic.
- ~ Rachel announced the event, "Race and Gender in the Occupy Movement," held at the Women's Resources Center at Wright and Green Streets on Monday, 2/27, from 7 to 9. There will also be a showing of the film, "Gasland," about the fracking issue on March 7th at Channing Murray at 7:30 pm.
- ~ Sandra mentioned that the on 3/19 the Republican party will be hosting Indiana governor, Mitch Daniels. The unions are organizing a counter protest.
- ~ Jesse shared the book *OCCUPY Scenes from Occupied America* published by Verso. The book chronicles OWS from its inception and contains human mic speeches as well as writings by people who had visited the encampment. Please see Jesse if you are interested in getting a copy.
- ~ Don't forget to listen to Occupy the Air radio show on WEFT 90.1 FM from 1 to 3 Saturdays.
- ~ Leighton mentioned Occupy the Midwest and wondered if it was on our radar as something that we wanted to plug into.

NEW BUSINESS

1. There was a brief discussion about the www.occupyCU.org site as well as our facebook page and what events get posted on it. Some thought it might be helpful to identify Occupy-centered/sponsored events as such. Alternatively, we could provide links or some other type of code that would identify certain events simply as items of interest. Ya'aqov felt that since Occupy is really a collective of the concerns we bring up, then we should post all events and people can pick and choose. Rachel felt that for people who are interested in OcCUpy, when they come to our web sites, we might want to make it easier to determine what we are about.
2. Ya'aqov reported that the SDaS has polished up their "road show" of skits and music and are ready to perform it for schools (middle, high, and college). However, the group is in need of contacts for the sort of audience they are targeting. If you know of any person who is involved with social studies, history, or civics instruction as well as political after-school clubs, please contact Ya'aqov.
3. Ya'aqov raised the issue of outreach to neighboring towns. In going to areas such as Rantoul or Mahomet, perhaps we will energize our own group as we meet and talk with others who are like-minded. Ian offered to get in touch with someone in Charleston about a possible connection. If you have any contacts in other towns, please contact Ya'aqov.
4. Jake of UPTV offered OcCUpy an hour program on television if we wanted it. Rachel offered to work with Alex on this.
5. Rachel reported that the OcCUpy column in the *Public i* was approved and wanted to ask the group about an article on the jail issue for a February 29th deadline. We had a lengthy discussion about how we should go about producing content for this monthly commitment. Some in the group felt that the column should take the format of individuals who are affiliated with OcCupy but do not necessarily represent the opinions of the entire diverse group (there would be some sort of disclaimer provided in the column) submitting articles each month and then allowing the editors of the paper choose which ones to go with. Sarah and Leighton represented those in the group who thought that we should empower different committees to write articles each month, submit the article to the "membership" for 24 hour turnaround, and trust that they will accurately represent the interests of our group and they will be accountable both for meeting the deadline as well as the content of the article. Sam felt that we should consider the fact that we need a "brand" as a local movement, especially as we move out beyond our community. In the end, it was decided that a column tentatively named "Voices from the Occupy Movement" (or Occupy Ink or Occupi or something similar) be written by whomever is interested each month and will identify him/herself as someone "who identifies with OcCUpy." William offered to send a copy of the speech he delivered at the County Board and which will appear elsewhere to any person who is interested in writing this month's article on the jail expansion. It is not clear that an article will be submitted in time to meet the deadline.

6. Stuart reported on an offer that was provided by Jennifer from SEIU for media training. Anyone who is interested in receiving media training should contact Stuart, who will put us in touch with the appropriate person.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Outreach Committee: Michael reported that he met with the Jobs with Justice people who are committed to helping the employees in the Flex-N-Gate factory. He has made a flier that gives details on the issue, as well as mentions the Speak Out that will feature company employees expressing their concerns on March 10. Michael reported also that he had talked with someone on the County Board who seems open to allowing persons in the jail who are awaiting trial to be released with GPS tracking devices. Therefore if both pre- and post-trial individuals are not required to remain in the jail, then perhaps that diffuses the need for an expansion. Both Jakobsson and Frericks seem to be in favor.

Foreclosure Committee: Jesse said that the group is still in the fact-finding stage. They are still looking into ways to find the people who may want our help. They have determined which judge and court room hears the foreclosure cases. They have also considered contacting African-American and other churches in town, as well as homeless shelters for possible leads. The committee still welcomes people to join if you are interested.

G8/Nato Committee: Damian reported that he had been in Chicago over the weekend and had met with the Occupy Chicago people who are organizing the event in May. They are calling for most people to attend the Saturday, May 19th parade and are stressing that it is to be safe and fun and family-oriented. The group is still in the initial stages of organizing. Stuart said that we should feel comfortable to offer the Chicago group our ideas as well as listen to them. There will be a People's Summit the weekend before and that might be a place where some of us want to go to connect, network, and get inspired. Ya'aqov asked why we should want to attend this group and Chris, Leighton, and Sarah offered their thoughts: It is, obviously, an international forum. It is rare that both summits occur in the same place. We have an opportunity to highlight the effects of the decisions of the 1% that affect global citizens, as well as how militarization cripples citizens and nations. The G8 committee will meet in the months ahead to coordinate logistics for the event, as well as drum up as much support in our communities as possible. We will also highlight the agenda for the meetings and why we need to be a part of this historic event.

RECAP/REPORT ON COMPLETED ACTIONS/EVENTS

None was offered.

PROPOSALS/OPEN DISCUSSION

None.

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FACEBOOK <https://www.facebook.com/OccupyChampaignUrbana>

OCCUPYCU.org <http://occupyCU.org>

OCCUPYthe AIR weft.org or occupytheair.blogspot.com OR

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Occupy-the-AIR-WEFT-901-FM>